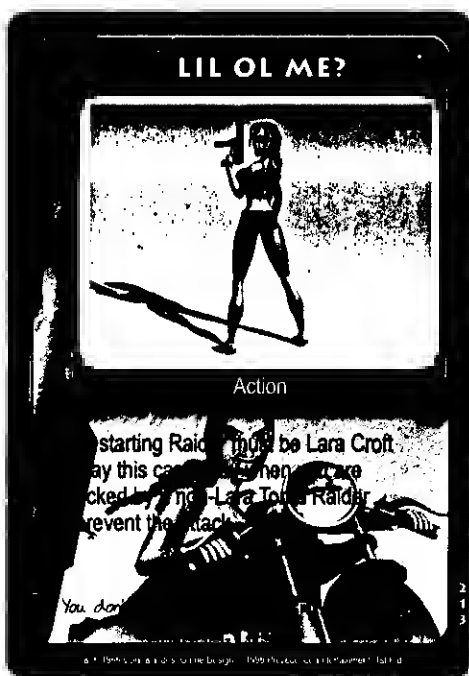


GRAUSTARK

#763 2002A, "Spring 1911"; 2002D, "Winter 1906"; 2004C, "Winter 1902" 12 March 2005



LEADER DIES HEIRLESS

Drawing Player must perform Leader Stature Check; all Diplomatic Ties are removed from the map; each Area in his empire gets an Unrest Marker and is checked for Rebellion. Player loses claim to any Area that rebels or that he does not possess. Player may voluntarily relocate his Court. Player must discard Holding Cards indicated to be lost when the owner goes heirless.

No Disaster on this Card

The Nobel Order of Cabalistic Mystics donates \$77 to help you find the Temple of Nosh. Believed to be at the Source of the Nile.



HOLY GRAIL

ANY YEAR random 40
Egyptian troops mutiny!

1c: Cairo, Bengazi, Port Said, Athens, Jerusalem, Salonika, Malta, Tunis, Taranto.

1935-39 random 47
IRA opens secret talks with German General Staff.

1c: Dublin, Belfast, Berlin.
2c: Glasgow, Manchester, London, Liverpool, Birmingham.



LORDS
1

CROMWELL
10

Tattershall
05

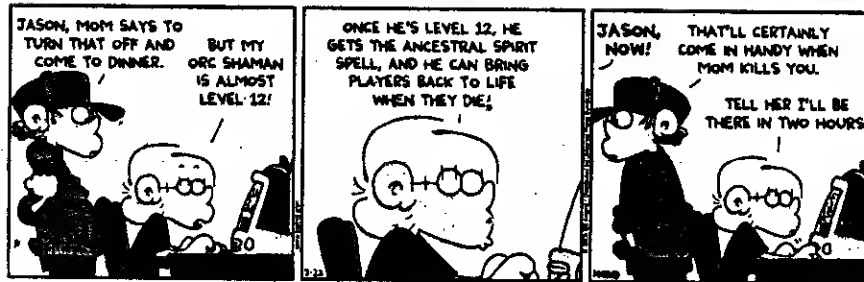
More collectible game cards - how many can you identify?
(Answers in the next issue)

Ooh, those horrible videogames! (See "Dungeons & Christians, p. 6)

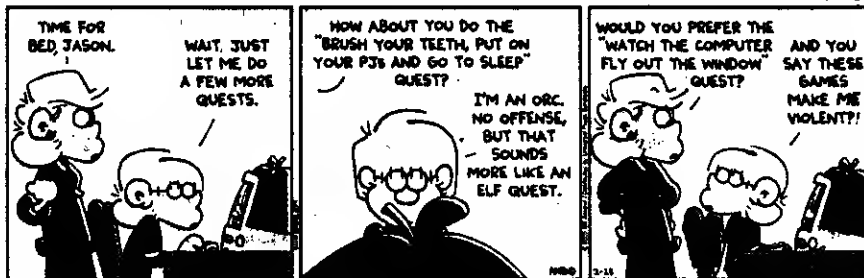
FOXTROT



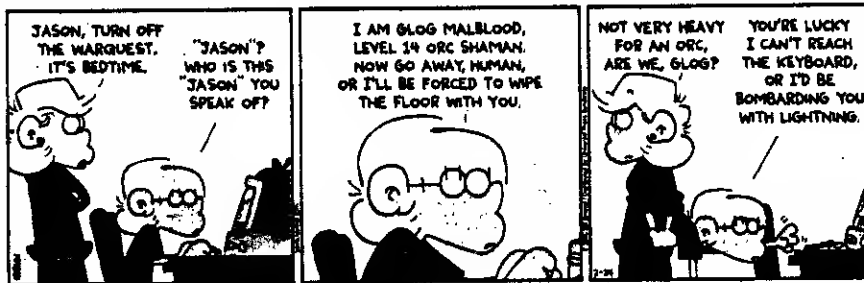
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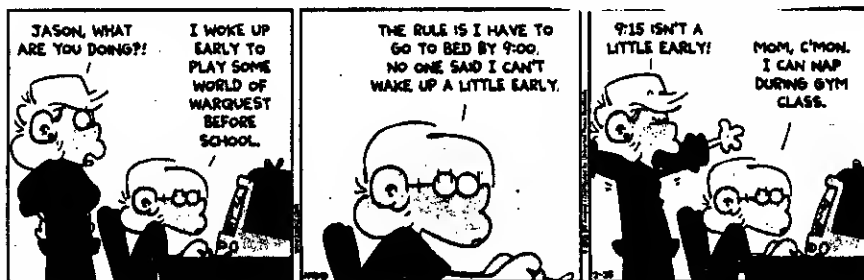
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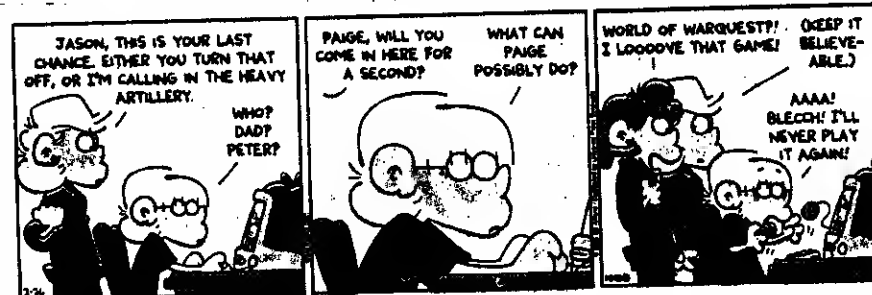
FOXTROT



FOXTROT



FOXTROT



YO HO HO AND AN AMPHORA OF WINE

Lindsey Davis, *Scandal Takes a Holiday* (2005, Mysterious Press, NY; \$25) For reviews of the fifteen previous books in this series, see Graustarks ##606, 608, 639, 641, 654, 671, 683, 706, 717, 731, 745, 759, and 762.

This latest detective adventure of Marcus Didius Falco in first-century Rome has an updating of Falco's extensive family tree to 76 CE, five years after the last one in *Poseidon's Gold*. However, there is a misprint in this otherwise very useful chart. Falco, his five sisters, and his brother, are listed in birth order from left to right. (Falco is the next to youngest.) However, some of the connecting lines are incorrectly drawn in this chart. The first two siblings are Victorina and Allia. Also, as you probably should be told, some of the people listed are dead by the beginning of this book: Victorina, Festus, Flora, and Famia. But Uncle Fulvius, "the one nobody ever talks about", puts in an appearance, after an absence so long that Falco does not at first recognize him. And, in addition to the family tree, there is Davis's usual and very useful cast of characters, with Falco's sarcastic comments on most of them.

Scandal Takes a Holiday takes Falco, and several members of his family, out of the stuffy courtrooms of Rome and into the bracing sea air of Ostia, Rome's port on the Tyrrhenian Sea. However, that bracing sea air is filled with the natural odors of dead fish and smelly cargoes, and with the artificial odors of human crime and corruption. Ancient Rome, we are continually reminded, is one of the most litigious and corrupt societies that ever existed. Not only does Latin remain as a large part of our legal vocabulary, but bribery is often characterized as "Quid pro quo."

Falco is in search of a missing Roman journalist named Diocles, who was last heard from investigating a promising story in Ostia for the *Acta Diurna*. But what was a journalist doing in Rome, centuries before the invention of the printing press? Well, there was no printing, but there was a news bulletin, posted daily in the Forum. This had been started about 150 years earlier by Julius Caesar, whose political support came mainly from the poorer class of citizens (*Populares*). The *Acta Diurna* kept them informed, frequently with information which the upper class (*Optimates*) did not wish them to know. Not all Roman citizens could read, but those who could would read it to those who could not. Even a few slaves could read, and thus made themselves serviceable as secretaries or tutors. (One of them, Cicero's secretary Tiro, invented shorthand.)

With both the Roman Republic and the family of Caesar extinct, the *Acta Diurna* now serves as a court circular, free from anything the imperial family does not want made public, but filled with enough news of sports, crime, and scandal to keep the public interested. The scandals are reported in a semi-anonymous style still popular today, as in "What well-known *Circus Maximus* charioteer drives horses by day and a certain Senator's wife by night?" And, under a pseudonym, the missing Diocles was the bulletin's gossip columnist.

Falco moves his household to Ostia, where his brother-in-law Lucius Petronius Longo ("Petro"), an officer in the *vigiles*, is already investigating suspicions of piracy. The official story is that Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus ("Pompey the Great") had wiped out piracy in the previous century, by resettling the Cilician and Illyrian pirates in their home provinces as law-abiding farmers. (In addition to the maps of Ostia and environs, the author provides us with a map of the Roman Empire so we can locate the homelands of the book's many non-Roman characters. Illyrians are probably the people we now call Albanians, and their status as law-abiding citizens seems to be about the same now as it was in the first century. Modern Albania's principal industries are Ponzi schemes and ethnic cleansing.)

However, events lead us to suspect that Pompey may have had an ulterior motive in allegedly ending piracy in this fashion. He may have suspected, as his rival Caesar did not, that naval power was the key to ruling an empire defined by its central sea, the Mediterranean, grandly called by Romans "Our Sea" (*Mare Nostrum*). As described in Steven Saylor's *The Judgment of Caesar*, reviewed in Graustark #762, Pompey was killed before he could call his ex-pirates back into action as his navy. But his son Sextus later used pirates as his navy in his nearly successful attempt to overthrow Marc Antony and Octavian. And even by Falco's time there are few opportunities on those hard-scrabble farms, making a life of piracy very attractive. Six or seven centuries later,

similar considerations would turn the sons of many Scandinavian farmers into Vikings.

By the year 76 CE, or "DCCCXXIX AVC" as Falco would have put it, the civil wars which ended the Republic are long over, and the pirates are just that - pirates, no matter what any city-dwelling Roman may believe about Pompey abolishing piracy. They seize ships, hijack cargoes, sell them to accommodating fences, and augment their income with kidnapping and slave dealing. As a major port, Ostia is where much of this activity goes on, despite the presence of a Roman naval base there, and a larger one down the coast at Misenum, near Naples, under the command of that Gaius Plinius Secundus who would, three years later, examine the eruption of Mount Vesuvius too closely. (During the 18th century, New York and Baltimore had similar reputations as havens for pirates and their fences.)

And, as you might expect in a seaside adventure, at one point Falco gets thrown overboard. Like most city-dwellers, then and now, he cannot swim, but is rescued by his disreputable father and his even more disreputable Uncle Fulvius, who are very close-mouthed about what they are doing, boating in the harbor. Of course Falco doesn't believe that they have been innocently fishing.

Although Rome's *vigiles* (cops plus firemen) also patrol Ostia on rotation from their Roman base, the real local power in this boom town is in the hands of the construction guilds. The guilds have their own private *vigiles*, who are often at odds with the official ones from Rome. There are also several characters who are not what they at first seem - official supporters of law and order who are in cahoots with pirates, and disreputable low-lives who are actually highly competent secret agents for the government. Two of the latter turn out to be a pair of gay lovers, which may bring these books under Christian condemnation. Moreover, they have been happily together for over 25 years, a thing that Christians do not believe gay men can do. (Only once in this series of sixteen books have Christians put in an appearance, in the sixth book, *Last Act in Palmyra*. Falco and Helena encounter them during an eastern adventure, and regard them about as we regard the disreputable street-corner religious cultists of our own time.)

Once out of Ostia's harbor, Falco is in for two periods of confinement, once in a tomb and once in a tauroboleum, a sacred pit in the shrine of Attis. (The bull-god Attis and his divine spouse Cybele, who decidedly outranks him in their worshippers' ceremonies, are two of the bizarre eastern gods whose introduction into Rome was loudly resisted by respectable Romans. It didn't work; eventually one of those eastern gods took over the whole empire.) Both times, he has company which makes his confinement even less pleasant. And, after a few ancillary murders, Diocles is eventually found, literally under the noses of the *vigiles* in Ostia.

If you have also read the novels of Steven Saylor and John Maddox Roberts, set in Rome in the previous century, you may wonder why the *vigiles* weren't called out to deal with the lawlessness that eventually led into the civil wars. It was because they did not then exist. They were established by Augustus Caesar. In 21 BCE the aedile Marcus Egnatius Rufus founded a private fire brigade. Under the circumstances that then existed, this could also be a private army, and Augustus quite rightly realized that a state that permits private armies to function on its territory is a state on its way to disintegration. (The United States seemed to be in danger of this in the middle 1990s, particularly in a few western states, but the government cracked down on a few of these self-styled "militias", and the rest dwindled into mere criminal gangs, or vanished altogether.) Rufus was executed, but in 6 CE Augustus set up seven corps of *vigiles*, in a patrol system described by Falco in these novels.

Throughout these books, Davis introduces small details about the laws and customs of ancient Rome. An agent of the pirate syndicate kidnaps a beautiful, rich, and ditzzy teen-age girl, and then has the poor judgment to fall in love with her, and she with him. This upsets the plans of his employers, who therefore arrange a funeral for him. The activities at this ancient equivalent of a 20th-century Chicago gangland funeral are described in detail, complete with a picnic buffet, and a riot set in motion by Falco and Petro and setting the Cilicians and Illyrians against each other. And, although Julius Caesar had been assassinated 119 years earlier, it was still treason to have an image of Cassius in your house, and highly questionable to arrange any kind of festivity

PATRIOTISM - XXXVII

PATRIOTISM is the principal cause of war.

PATRIOTISM is the unprincipled cause of war.

PATRIOTISM is the statement by Bush the Father, that an Atheist cannot be a good American.

PATRIOTISM is the belief that America cannot remain a free country unless freedom of speech is suppressed at Columbia University, the University of Colorado, and Hamilton College.

PATRIOTISM is an American soldier asking an Iraqi what his book is. When the soldier found out it was a Koran, he tore it to pieces.

PATRIOTISM is referring to Arabs as "sand niggers".

PATRIOTISM is a signed editorial, laughably called a "column", by George Friedman in the *New York Post* of 26 February 2005, calling for the judicial use of torture in American police interrogations.

PATRIOTISM is the incredible but actual attempt by President Bush's Department of "Justice" to appeal the decision by Federal District Judge Henry F. Floyd that it is unconstitutional to imprison Jose Padilla, an American citizen, indefinitely with charges or a trial.

PATRIOTISM is U. S. troops shooting up the car of Giuliana Sgrana, an Italian reporter just released by Iraqi kidnappers, killing her escort from Italy's Secret Service and wounding her.

PATRIOTISM is two colleges in the South Orange County (CA) Community College District, canceling a 14-year-old summer program for studying in Spain, because they are upset about Spanish troops being withdrawn from Iraq. (*Newsday*, 7 March 2005)

PATRIOTISM is telling an American platoon in Iraq that "they had followed the rules of engagement" when they shot up a sedan and killed the parents of four blood-spattered children also in the car. (*New York Times*, 7 March 2005)

PATRIOTISM is trying to extradite Bobby Fisher to the U. S. so he can be put on trial for playing chess in a nation which no longer exists.

PATRIOTISM is "a home-made video compiled by Florida National Guard soldiers in Iraq [which] showed members of the unit kicking a bound prisoner and showing his bullet wounds to the camera, but no criminal charges were brought against them." (*New York Times*, 5 March 2005)

PATRIOTISM is continuing to refer to Alan Dershowitz as a "civil liberties attorney" even though he has endorsed the use of torture on suspects - provided always that a judge has first issued a "torture warrant" against them.

PATRIOTISM is the claim, by a branch of the Republican Party called "USA Next", that the American Association of Retired Persons is opposing the privatization of Social Security accounts because it is trying to legalize gay marriage, despite the fact that the AARP has never said anything about any homosexual issue.

PATRIOTISM is Daniel Pipes's demand, in the *New York Post* of 12 November 2002, that legislators, alumni, and students' parents take control of universities and prevent professors from taking public positions of which Pipes disapproves.

PATRIOTISM is putting New York City police on high alert in February 2003 "all because the word 'underground' had been picked up in an intercepted conversation between terrorists. Nothing happened." (William Grimes, *New York Times*, 2 March 2005)

PATRIOTISM is the belief that the United States has any interest in who owns an obscure island in the South China Sea.

PATRIOTISM is a cottage industry which produces books claiming that France is now and has throughout our history been the deadly enemy of the United States of America.

PATRIOTISM is the way in which fellow graduates of the prestigious Horace Mann Preparatory School have rallied to the defense of Lt. Ilario Pantano, USMC, accused of shooting two unarmed Iraqis in the back,

PATRIOTISM is the Republican Party's horrifying 2004 discovery, that John Kerry and John Edwards are lawyers!

PATRIOTISM is the belief that George W. Bush's ability to speak Spanish and Condoleezza Rice's ability to speak Russian are good, while John Kerry's ability to speak French is bad.

PATRIOTISM is the principal cause of war.

DUNGEONS & CHRISTIANS - CLXXXI

For no intelligible reason, a few Christian fanatics have for the past 25 years or so been attacking Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) and other role-playing games (RPGs), video games, and even board games. The principal opposition to these bursts of religious fanaticism comes from the Game Manufacturers Association (GAMA) and from the Committee for the Advancement of Role-Playing Games (CAR-PGa). This column relies heavily on reports from both of these organizations. CAR-PGa Newsletter is published monthly by Paul Cardwell Jr., 1127 Cedar, Bonham, TX 75418 at \$12.00 a year for domestic, and \$13.50 a year for foreign, addresses. It keeps us posted on attacks on D&D and other RPGs, and provides us with arguments and strategies to be used against attempts to censor or ban games. It also lists upcoming gaming conventions.

But game-bashing is only a small part of the campaign of the Christian Right to dictate every aspect of American life. This column therefore has to deal sometimes with other aspects of this campaign. For details about this campaign from their own, log on to the website of the Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, <www.godhatesfags.com> and its spin-off, <www.godhatesamerica.com>. (New York Times, 1 March 2004)

*

Someone in Europe has apparently picked up on the videogame White Law, which is being promoted in this country by a white supremacist group, and was cited in this column in Graustark #760. According to the New York Times of 16 February 2005, "Gypsy groups have forced a Hungarian Web site to remove a game called Gypsy Action in which players were invited to ethnically cleanse the country of Gypsies...The game offered players a variety of firearms to use on the Gypsy, or Roma, population and, if they managed to wipe out the entire population, the country's color on a map turned white." The new ban on Gypsy Action will certainly be called "political correctness", which can only cause us to wish that we had more of it here.

And, in the Muddle East, both Jews and Arabs have designed first-person shooter videogames showing their virtuous selves in righteous battle against the evil-by-definition enemy. For example, "The Lebanese terrorist group Hezbollah has created a war game called Special Force, in which Arabs fight their 'Zionist enemy'. Visit <specialforce.net/english/indexeng.htm> for more info and, possibly, your very own FBI dossier." (Nick Catucci, Village Voice, 16 April 2003)

There is even an Arab computer game whose players get to be suicide bombers without the nuisance of actually dying.

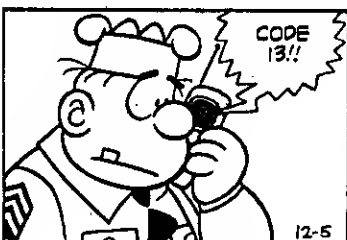
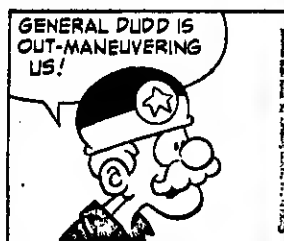
*

On p. 2 of this issue is a comic-strip commentary about the obsession of teens and tweens with violent role-playing videogames. Foxtrot no longer runs regularly in any New York City newspaper, but for one week Newsday substituted it for Boondocks, whose artist took a short break.

Andrea Fox often tries to restrain the interests of her children (Peter, 16, Paige, 14, and Jason, 10) in things she considers unsuitable, such as Peter's enthusiasm for rock music and the Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue, Paige's choices in clothing,

BEETLE BAILEY

By MORT WALKER



or Jason's obsession with anything you can do with a computer. (Jason often reminds me of the teenager who briefly persuaded his mother that the "M" rating on a videogame stands for "Mild".) Andrea's solution to Jason's obsession is based on the well-known fact that opposite-sex siblings, four years or less apart in age,

are natural enemies.

*

More comic-strip commentary on war and war games was provided by Mort Walker in this *Beetle Bailey* Sunday strip from 5 December 2004. Walker started *Beetle Bailey* as a college-boy strip, about 55 years ago, but found that it was not doing well. The American intervention into the Korean Civil War of 1950-53 was then in such progress as it ever achieved, so Walker had Beetle flunk out and enlist. (The United States is trying to conquer the world with school drop-outs. That sort of thing might make us think, but not anybody in the Pentagon.)

The Korean-American War was at the time about as popular as a war ever gets, so for years *Beetle Bailey* was a MYCA strip like many from World War II. ("Meet Your Cuddly Army") But, over the decades, it gradually became more critical of war. It simply ignored the American invasion of Vietnam; Beetle and all his fellow soldiers merely rusticated at Camp Swampy. But since then the strip has become more and more sarcastic about the official reasons given for going to war. However, I don't believe that we will ever see its characters either torturing people in Iraq, or complaining about other soldiers torturing people in Iraq. Or Iran.

This strip features Cosmo, one of the many minor characters in *Beetle Bailey*. Everyone who has ever served in the armed forces of any nation has known someone like Cosmo. He is the guy who organizes every poker game and wins most of them, the guy who knows how to evade orders and regulations without getting caught, the guy who can sell you things nominally forbidden on a military base.

Nor were such stratagems unknown in previous wars. Bill Mauldin (1921-2002) once drew a cartoon of war games in Louisiana during basic training maneuvers. A newsboy is walking through the woods selling papers. Behind him in concealment, one soldier tells another that yesterday they captured several members of the "enemy" army doing this.

And this Mauldin cartoon, from just after the end of World War II, tells us how Camp Swampy probably came into the possession of the federal government in the first place.



"I'll never forget how my old man used to laugh after he sold this swamp to th' Veterans Administration."

*

Religious attempts to comprehend the Indian Ocean tsunami of 26 December 2004 are apparently going to be with us for a long time. Recently an Orthodox Jew of my acquaintance insisted that the tsunami was divine punishment for the Muslims who lived in the afflicted nations. When I pointed out that the majority of Indians are Hindus and the majority of Thais and Sri Lankans are Buddhists, he observed that many Muslims live in both countries. Well, a few million Muslims live in the U. S., so are we next?

This question was also addressed by readers of a *Newsday* column conducted jointly by "the God Squad", a rabbi and a Roman Catholic monsignor. A Florida reader asked:

"One religious leader recently called the tsunami 'an expression of God's wrath with the world punished for wrongdoing.' Another was reported as saying the tsunami was a punishment for those celebrating Christmas or wearing bikinis. How do you regard such views?"

The reverend gentlemen did their best. After admitting that Korah and other enemies of Moses were swallowed up by an earthquake (Exodus), they claimed that this "doesn't mean that every earthquake is God's punishment for the wicked." With these words they obviously took issue with Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell, who claimed in 2001 that the suicide attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were divine punishment for the fact that abortion is legal in this country.

(continued on p. 12)

2002A

"Spring 1911"

RUSSIA HANGS IN THERE

The "Winter 1910" Austro-Hungarian build, listed as "A Vie" in the last issue, was actually "A Bud". All players were informed.

FRANCE (Street): F Nth-Hel; A Pic-Lon; F Eng C A Pic-Lon; F Cly-Nrg; A Bur-Ruh; A Bel S A Bur-Ruh; F Edi-Nth; A Par-Bur; A Mar S A Par-Bur.

GERMANY (Bourgeois): No moves received. A Kie & A Hol hold.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Watkins): A Mun S FRENCH A Bur-Ruh; A Boh-Sil; A Gal S A Boh-Sil; A Vie-Boh; F Ion & A Ven hold; A Mos-St.P; A Tyr S A Mun; A Bud-Vie.

RUSSIA (Biehl): A St.P-Fin; A War-Sil; A Ber S A War-Sil; A Den-Swe; F Bal S A Den-Swe.

TURKEY (Jordan): A Sev-Mos; A Ukr S A Sev-Mos; A Sil-Pru; F Bul(e.c.)-Bla; F Nwy-Ska; F Bar S AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN A Mos-St.P; F Tun holds; A Ank-Arm; F Con-Aeg.

Underlined moves are not possible. The deadline for "Fall 1911" moves is NOON, FRIDAY 15 APRIL 2005. John R. Biehl is now playing Russia. Stand-by moves for Germany should be sent in by Paul D. Milewski, whose address (with an incorrect middle initial) is on p. 11.

Rumors seem to indicate that an armistice is under negotiation in this game. If this should come to pass, players are reminded that the subscriptions of Richard Bourgeois, Harley Jordan, Dan McKinsey, David Stone, Sigourney Street, and Bill Watkins will expire with the end of 2002A. A new game is now being organized in Graustark, and two players have already signed up. For information on joining the new game, see p. 9.

2002D

"Winter 1906"

Following "Fall 1906" moves in this game, Italy rather than Russia has a removal. All players were informed with those "Fall" moves.

FRANCE (Lischett): Builds A Mar.

ITALY (Verheiden): Removes F Tyr.

GERMANY (Quirk): Builds A Ber.

The deadline for "Spring 1907" moves is NOON, FRIDAY 15 APRIL 2005.

2004C

"Winter 1902"

Following "Fall 1902" moves Italy retreats F Ion-Tun and Russia retreats A Rum-Sev.

GERMANY (Mathias): No build received.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Alme): Removes F Ion.

ITALY (Mooney): Builds F Nap & A Ven.

RUSSIA (Biehl): Removes F Bal.

The deadline for "Spring 1903" moves is NOON, FRIDAY 15 APRIL 2005. Stand-by moves for Germany should be sent in by Michael Neal, whose address is on p. 11.

PLEASE STAND BY

I am willing to take over games that have been abandoned by their gamesmasters. So if you are a postal gamesmaster who is no longer able to publish, or if you are a player in a postal game of regular Diplomacy that has gone for two or three months without a move being published, please get in touch with the Orphan Games Director, Michael Lowrey. (See p. 11 for his address.) If the game is to continue in Graustark, I would need the addresses of all active players, the current position, and a list of who owns which supply centers. If subscription money can be passed along to me, fine. Otherwise I will ask players to join a new game in Graustark, or to subscribe to Graustark if they do not already do so. Players who resign or drop out can be replaced by

(continued on p. 14)

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY

At the moment of writing, I am not quite sure when this issue will get into the mail, but if necessary I will adjust deadlines. This is because, very late in the night of 7-8 March, I suffered a hypoglycemic attack. At first I didn't know what it was, but feared a hemiplegic stroke, because I could not talk plainly or move my right arm and leg. Perdita phoned 911, and soon paramedics started piping glucose into me. This quickly restored my abilities to speak and move, and by the time the ambulance arrived I was able to dress myself and walk out to it. At Maimonides Hospital they gave me further examinations and determined what the matter was. I was able then to go home, and by the next day I was feeling normal but very weary. This may delay somewhat the adjudications and printing of this issue. Some adjustment of my diabetic medication was necessary the next time I saw my regular physician.

*

Today's terror alert color code is Black and Blue, for the beatings administered to prisoners at Guantánamo Bay, Abu Ghraib prison, Adhamiya Palace, and elsewhere in what the Bush Administration now frankly calls America's "empire".

*

Graustark is the Very First bulletin for the postal play of Diplomacy. It is published every fourth Saturday by John Boardman, 234 East 19th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11226-5302. Diplomacy is a board game of negotiation and conflict for the period of World War I. It was designed by Allan B. Calhamer and is now

published by Hasbro. Another new postal Diplomacy game is now being	This is
organized in Graustark, at a game fee of \$35. (For Canadian and Mexican	O At
addresses the game fee is \$50, and for other foreign addresses it is \$100,	P Great
or 75 euros in cash.) This game fee includes a subscription to Graustark	E Intervals
for as long as the game lasts, whether or not you are eliminated. With	R This
your game fee send in a list of the countries you'd like to play, in your	A Appears
order of preference, and I'll try to put you as close to the top of that	T To
list as I can. If you do not already have the postal rules for Diplomacy,	I Inflamm
which were last published in Graustark #749, let me know when you send in	O Optic
your game fee, and I'll send you a copy.	N Nerves

Graustark subscriptions for non-players are 10 issues for \$15 for U. S. addresses, and \$40 or 30 euros for others. Back issues as available are 10 issues for \$5 for U. S. addresses. To foreign addresses, back issues have the same price as for foreign subscriptions. # 2104

Players who phone in their moves should call me at 718-693-1579 or 718-951-5808, extension 2. There are answering machines which can take your moves if I'm out. I do not have an e-mail address.

I want to again remind players that the U. S. Postal "Service" is not capable of reliably getting mail here in less than a week. Please take this into account in sending in your moves. If, a few times, your moves have arrived here by mail in less than a week, do not assume that this will always be the case.

Graustark readers who are interested in postal games which don't run here, are invited to write to the publishers of 'zines with which I trade, and ask what game openings they have. For their addresses, see all the readers indicated by "(T)" for "trade" in the Graustark Directory on pp. 10-11. Several of these publishers run a wide variety of postal games.

*

"The only people who think that intelligence wins wars - hot or cold - are intelligence people." - anonymous official in the Department of "Defense", *New York Times*, 2 March 2005

*

Charles Herold reviews several new computer games in the *New York Times* of 3 March 2005. One of them, Hearts of Iron II from Paradox Interactive, is "a complex game for the thoughtful, somewhat obsessive player...a war strategy simulation set during World War II in which you control all aspects of warfare, where to send troops, where to build factories, what countries to ally with...This is a game for people who have shelves of

THE GRAUSTARK DIRECTORY

Players in a current postal Diplomacy games are indicated by its Boardman Number, with the initial of the country being played, and with "S" indicating an active stand-by player. (E. g., "2002A-G" or "2002D-FS".) Paying subscribers will be indicated by the number of the issue with which the subscription expires. Other designations are:

N: entrant in a new postal Diplomacy game now being organized in Graustark. (See p. 9 for details.)

T: trade copy

C: complimentary copy for a gamer

R: complimentary copy for a non-gamer interested in the mystery novel reviews

U: uncomplimentary copy

This directory is accurate to the date of 12 March 2005. Please let me know of any corrections or additions that need to be made, particularly if you want your nine-digit ZIP code, phone number, fax number, or e-mail address added to your listing. This is particularly important for electronic addresses, which seem to change more frequently than do postal addresses.

If you are already a Graustark subscriber when you decide to send in a game fee, then when the game begins, the number of issues you had coming when you joined will be added to your subscription once the game ends. After your name in the Directory will appear some such notation as "2004C-T+6".

Stephen Agar (T), 4 Cedar Gardens, Brighton BN1 6YD, ENGLAND; 01273-562430;
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WHEN DO YOU EXPIRE?

The subscriptions of the following readers expire with the indicated issue of Graustark. This information is valid to the date of 9 March 2005. For information on joining a new game, or extending your subscription, see p. 9.

765 - Mike Fisher	767 - Eric Verheiden
766 - Jim Dapkus	W. Andrew York
767 - Jim Grose	770 - Michael Neal
Paul Milewski	799 - Brenton Verploeg

THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS - III

"Dental records provided proof positive that the body in the garden was that of the infamous Nazi leader. Using the remains of the body's extensive dental work, the Soviets matched Hitler's teeth with records from his dentist's office. Eva Braun's body, too, was identified by her dental work." - Gordon Stein and Marie J. MacNee, *Hoaxes!, Dupes, Dodges & Other Dastardly Deceptions* (1995, Visible Ink Press, Detroit), p. 179

"The November 1981 issue of the British Medical Association's *News Review* published the findings of a ten-year study on the World War II records of Adolf Hitler and his mistress Eva Braun...The report said that the odontological data for the female body presumed to be Eva Braun's did not agree with her personal records." - Timothy B. Benford, *The World War II Quiz & Fact Book* (1982), p. 211

DUNGEONS & CHRISTIANS' (continued from p. 7)

Such lunacies are not new. The Roman Emperor Justinianus I claimed that the earthquake which destroyed Antioch in 526, killing about as many people as last year's tsunami did, was divine punishment for homosexuality. And during World War II a sect in California (naturally!) interpreted the Book of Revelation as a prophecy that Japan would win the war, and therefore opposed the American war effort as a blasphemous attempt to resist the will of God.

*

Unfortunately, the students at Hogwarts Academy have not yet taken up the play of D&D, or any other RPGs, probably because they have a lot of "real" magical excitement around them. Still, D&D and the Harry Potter novels of J. K. Rowling are not totally disconnected with each other. Ever since the Harry Potter books began racking up enormous sales, there have been furious arguments among Christians as to whether they stir up interest in "the occult" and are likely to seduce their large audience of children into un-Christian thoughts and practices.

This desperate Christian attempt to preserve their virtual monopoly of religion in our society is further complicated by the very popular fantasy novels of J. R. R. Tolkien (*The Lord of the Rings*) and C. S. Lewis (*The Chronicles of Narnia*). Some Christians have also condemned these. The early editions of Jack T. Chick's tract *Dark Dungeons*, an attack on D&D, also warn against "occult paraphernalia like your rock music, occult books [including C. S. Lewis and Tolkien, both of which can be found in occult book stores], charms, Dungeons and Dragons material. Don't throw them away. **Burn them!** We'll do that here tonight." And a burning of the books, like the one recommended in Acts 19:19, takes place. In later editions the words in brackets are omitted, but the rest of the warning is still there. Incidentally, use of the printed expression "Dungeons and Dragons" instead of the correct, and copyrighted, "Dungeons & Dragons", is a sure sign that you are hearing from an ignorant fanatic.

However, other Christian critics maintain that there is a qualitative difference between the "good fantasy" of Tolkien and Lewis, and the "bad fantasy" of Rowling and such other authors of popular fantasy series as R. L. Stine. This difficult job is undertaken by Richard Abanes in *Fantasy and Your Family: A Closer Look at the Lord of the Rings, Harry Potter, and Magick in the Modern World*. (2002, Christian Publications, Camp Hill, PA; \$9 tpb) I will take up the alleged connections between Harry Potter and D&D in the next issue.

YO HO HO AND AN AMPHORA OF WINE (continued from p. 4)

on the birthday of either him or Brutus. Also, we are informed of a decree by a previous emperor: "Claudius pronounced his edict that farting was legal at dinner parties." That actually happened.

Nearly at the end of the book, Falco takes another look at a diagram he had previously dismissed as a chessboard, and finds it is a hand-drawn map of Ostia which materially aids in the solution of his case. Chess, however, would not be invented in faraway India for another five centuries or so. The ancient Romans did play board

games; what little is known about them may be found in Falkener's *Games Ancient and Oriental*. And some translators seem to render just about any board game as "chess" or "draughts", no matter its rules, location, or period.

*

I have finally turned up a reference to a historical character who is probably the informer and lawyer Paccius Africanus, a major character in *The Accusers*, the previous book in this series. According to Tacitus, Paccius had been a senator, until Vespasianus dismissed him and a good many other senators upon assuming the rule of Rome. However, I can find no evidence that he had ever been a consul.

And there is, as I had suspected, a relationship between the Gaius Ateius Capito who is the major villain in John Maddox Roberts's *The Tribune's Curse* (set in 55 BCE and reviewed in *Graustark* #758) and the man of the same name who founded and ran a law school during the subsequent reign of Augustus Caesar. The latter was the son of the former. And it seems that families (*stirpes*) of the same name could be found in several different clans (*gentes*). There were Capito families in the Ateian, Fonteian, Insteian, Lucilian, and Virginian clans. I got this information when I discovered a very detailed classical dictionary, *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, edited by William Smith, originally published in 1844, and reprinted in 1967. Fortunately, the Mid-Manhattan Library has a copy of this three-volume work, whose thoroughness seems to be second only to that of *Paulis Reallexikon*.

As for Roberts's next novel, *The Judgment of Caesar*, King Ptolemy XIII of Egypt had four daughters and two sons, though the identity of their mother(s) still escapes me. Two of the daughters, Berenice and Tryphoena, died in their father's lifetime, Berenice at his orders. His two sons and his daughter Arsinoë probably died at the orders of their sister Cleopatra. Ptolemy XIII, and possibly Tryphoena, seem to have been the last members of the House of Ptolemy to die natural deaths.

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 9)

books on military strategy and begin sentences with, 'If I had been in Eisenhower's shoes in 1941, I would have...' This did not prove to be Herold's favorite type of game, though I am certain that we all know gamers who would go for it in a big way. Moreover, it deals with a war which lies safely in the past, and which was decisively won by the side which should have won it.

Herold is more enthusiastic about Terzio's *The Black Castle*, a game which teaches Chess and Chess strategy. This game even includes a Chess-playing rat called, of course, "Chesster".

Chesster, however, is not the first Chess-playing rat in the literature. That distinction belongs to Zeno, in Charles L. Harness's short story "The Chessplayers", first published in *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction* in October 1953, and included in Marcello Truzzi's anthology *Chess in Literature* (1974, Avon, New York). This anthology would be well worth a search. It also includes Fritz Leiber's 1966 classic "The 64-Square Madhouse", an anticipation of the role of the computer in Chess, and works by Edgar Allan Poe, Ambrose Bierce, Sholem Aleichem, Stephen Leacock, Lord Dunsany, and Isaac Asimov.

*

Some of the cards on the front cover of this issue are from collectible card games, while others are used in the play of board games. They will be identified in the next issue.

*

Paul D. Milewski sent in an observation on my comment, in the last issue, that the First Commandment is incompatible with the First Amendment. He refers us to an article entitled "The Lost Goddess of Israel" on pp. 36-40 of the March/April issue of *Archaeology*, "in which the author suggests the reason for the First Commandment is to suppress an essentially polytheistic tradition predating and coexisting with early monotheistic Judaism."

Efforts made to suppress the worship of rival gods and goddesses may be found through much of Jewish scripture. Some passages, such as Isaiah 46:1, accept the actual existence of other gods, though they are shown cringing with fear before the big tough God of Israel. Jeremiah 7:18 shows that Jews had once even worshipped a goddess.

Robert Graves and Rafael Patai have taken up evidence for this viewpoint in their book *Hebrew Myths: The Book of Genesis*, which suggests that the Israelites once worshipped other gods. The tales from Genesis are compared with rabbinical commentary, and with the customs and legends of other peoples. In some places, Graves seems to be expanding on the ideas he put forward in his novel *King Jesus*.

*

Speaking of ancient Jewish mythology, there is an incorrect scriptural reference back on p. 7 of this issue. The story of people being punished by an earthquake is in Numbers 16:31-33.

PLEASE STAND BY (continued from p.8)

Graustark stand-by players.

Stand-by players are always needed for postal Diplomacy games in Graustark. If you volunteer as a stand-by, you may be called upon whenever a current player misses a move. If you send in moves for that country for the next turn, and the present player does not, you will take over play of that position. No game fee will be asked, though you should keep your subscription current, or enroll in a new Graustark game. No stand-by will be called upon in a game in which he or she has already played.

Stand-by volunteers who are willing to take on additional games of postal Diplomacy are listed below. A stand-by player who is already playing in a Graustark game are indicated by "*". A player who is called on in this issue to stand by is indicated by "#"; see p. 8 for details. If you wish your name added to or removed from this list, please let me know.

Hank Alme
John R. Biehl*
Paul D. Milewski#
Michael Neal#

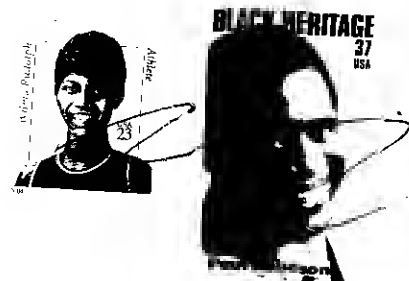
Michael Quirk*
Eric Verheiden*
Fred Wiedemeyer*

GRAUSTARK #763

John Boardman
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Brooklyn, NY 11226-5302

- () - You may be interested in an item on p. ____.
- () - Sample copy.
- () - You missed a move in this issue. See p. ____.
- () - A stand-by move is needed from you in _____. See p. ____.

WAR IS TERRORISM



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